

# The Challenges Faced By International Students In The United States

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## Abstract

In the past two years, the number of international students applying for training in US universities increased by 8% (IIE, 2014). The purpose of the study is to discuss the challenges facing international students in the United States. While international students benefit from the university, they are faced with adaptation difficulties, a different adaptation of the students' indigenous peoples, such as cultural heritage, barbarism, the loss of social support, discrimination, language barriers, loneliness, depression, anxiety and academic adjustment. This study was quantitative, with the participation of students from different countries who were registered in US universities. The impact of the differences and experiences of foreign cultural students can help to integrate issues to integrate the University of Rowan better. The study helps to raise awareness of the adaptation features of international students and can help them achieve success.

## Introduction

This study carried out the factors that occurred when international students moved to identify work in the United States. International students in American higher education play an essential role, as a variety of attitudes help to internationalize American lessons and improve the quality of education, research, the community and the economy. The literature explains what international students could have when they come to the new Universities; for example, some university professors asked to stimulate the learning experience and encourage participation in the classroom and beyond. International students can get developmental anomalies when they are sent to American teachers (Almurideef, 2016). While international students receive educational experience in the United States, they make significant sacrifices in the growth of their homes, their families and their social and financial resources in their countries.

In addition to language and cultural events, these students are interested in obtaining a visa. They must often be struggling to support their income in the United States and work with American colleagues to make social and academic cohesion. They may have grown up in a foreign country with different training and work models, which create different cultures for their learning culture. In making these sacrifices and successfully organizing the international students, it is for US higher education institutions to do everything possible to protect them and help them achieve the goal to complete.

International students have accumulated information about the problems of American colleges and universities. A significant number of university experiments occur after the lessons, and social integration can be a problem among international students. It is not only the academic adviser's responsibility to enrol students in the classes but also to encourage them to participate in the university and gain information on the curriculum (Bauer & Picciotto, 2013). There are many ways in which universities can meet the needs of international students. These include developing a global philosophy, improving the skills that must be understood, and increasing international students' sensitivity to the prospect of international students experiencing their experiences in higher education institutions in the United States.

## 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Examining this study, we see the ideas of international students attending university who have graduated from the United States. In addition to these fields, with great difficulty, the use of international students and higher education continues. International students depend on many factors, such as adapting to new conditions, academic pressure, finances, language barriers, and loneliness. The focus of students on international students needs to be studied, but the first problem is that students do not use the English language first. English international students are important because they help with social success, and establishing links with other students can have an impact on academic relationships. International students have good academic officials in foreign countries, and fewer academic and social difficulties are experienced. The means of the social and academic part of the city where they live in the country of the students are international and to observe. Therefore, it is necessary to integrate into the international activities of students. How much of a method of action is not easy for clients in the candidate countries of the New International Education?

## 1.2 Study Objectives

In support of this study was to identify the problems of international students working in the United States. Because of this, however, our successes have passed on to international competition of international students in school life and social and large. At the same time, we focus our research and experience not only on the benefit of international students but also on helping students become more successful once again. This study shows the program's support for more international assistance that will meet global needs and individual needs.

## Literature Review

### 2.1 Cultural Issues

When international students arrive in the United States from several countries, they find themselves

immersed in a new and entirely different culture, and it comes as a “culture shock” for most of the students. Culture shock is the severe, intense, and frequent overwhelming feelings of irritability and homesickness which people experience when they reside in a new country and face new customs, new people, a modern society, new norms, and new language. The United States is often referred to as a melting pot with millions of people from around the globe belonging to several cultures and traditions in one place, making the American culture unique and distinct from others (Mark, 2015). The culture and customs of everyday life in the United States, whether in a classroom, a dorm setting, or a restaurant, are different from those of other countries like Japan, Spain, China, etc. For instance, people bow down when they meet a new person in Japan to show respect and acknowledgement, but it would be highly inappropriate in the United States. Also, in Spain, people casually touch each other in busy or public areas (not with the intention of harm or harassment), but in the United States, personal space is highly valued, and people do not consider it right if touched by strangers in any way.

International students not only have to face cultural shocks but also go through severe homesickness. New places, new people, new friends, new food, new study system all at once make it difficult for international students to adjust as they have to increase their network, make contacts with new people, and blend in with local people whether they want or not. This is necessary to successfully progress the academic career and benefit from endless educational and professional opportunities.

## 2.2 Financial Issues

Other than the cultural challenges, financial difficulties are also very overpowering in the United States, and international students have to deal with these as well. The tuition fees of public colleges are high here and higher if the college is private. Not only are the tuition fees a big problem for international students, but they also have to pay for their living expenses, food, board costs, rent, medical bills, and any unexpected expenses in a foreign land. With so many expenses, they have to carefully figure out how they are going to manage their finances here in the United States (Rosenbergon, 2016).

## 2.3 Social Issues

On societal levels, international students face the difficulties of understanding and interacting with new and different people than their home country. The social situations and the etiquette to behave well in those specific situations in the United States might be very strange and odd for international students. Initially, they can feel lonely and intimidated while interacting with people around them. Social situations in a foreign country not only involve the classroom settings because most of the social experiences happen outside the classroom. So, it can be a hurdle for international students to integrate and mix socially, for instance, at part-time jobs, social organizations, and academic clubs. They feel shy and puzzled when they have to meet and approach new people and make friends.

Furthermore, the language barrier is a significant hurdle for international students, even when most of them have scored well on the TOEFL and IELTS exams. However, it is difficult to use a new language in daily life and multiple social situations with new people, like expressing opinions in classrooms and interacting with classmates and teachers. Also, due to a lack of communication, they hesitate and often fail to take leadership roles in their academic platforms and workplaces (Rice, 2017).

## 2.4 Academic Issues

Academic challenges also become severe for international students in a faraway foreign country as they may have been used to different educational, learning, and grading systems. With so many other barriers, it is difficult for them to adjust to their educational institutions and focus entirely on their studies. Classroom and language expectations have proven to be different for international students, and they don't readily find themselves accepting and adjusting to these expectations. American professors appreciate interactive sessions during classes, the difference of opinions, and a direct approach, which is very frightening for new international students who are used to face-to-face classes, always agreeing with professors and don't know how to speak up.

Moreover, the educational system of the US is entirely different from that of other countries as it includes a semester system, which is based on both face-to-face and online learning. Almost all of the courses and classes require students to do their assignments, write research papers, post discussions, follow netiquettes, regularly participate in class, make presentations, and attempt multiple tests and exams, and all of these within strict deadlines. This undoubtedly can prove to be nerve-wracking and scary to a new international student who has not observed or done something like this before in their academic environments. Writing research papers, various types of essays, simple assignments, homework, following different citation styles, giving references, and following the plagiarism rules is regular in the college and university system of the United States, and it takes stressful months and years to learn and cope with these challenges for the international students. Many international students perceive cheating as sharing, and it is very tough for them to understand the concept of plagiarism, while native students are already accustomed to the idea and practice of abstaining from plagiarism since their schools in America (Banjong & Olson, 2016).

## 2.5 Language Issues

Language difficulties are a significant problem for international students. For example, teaching English attracted more attention in China and became more popular, especially when writing, reading and speaking. Many Chinese students do not understand the importance of grammar and English vocabulary. Studies show that English plays an essential role in completing work successfully in an English-speaking environment. Students who are less fluent in English face problems with peer group integration and addressing a lower level of performance.

These problems often have a higher risk for international students or students from students with

academic difficulties. American colleges and university departments require that international students have been tested for information on English (TOEFL or IELTS) to evaluate their English language skills in writing, written, oral, and written language. Language barriers can adversely affect friendships with Americans (Cheng & Erben, 2012). Many international students have a comfortable relationship with Americans because they have difficulty understanding some American students or are impatient to listen to international students fluent in English.

Most of the studies focus on English only for academic purposes. English helps international students build social relationships with other students and influences their academic performance in one study; it is believed that the level of English teaching in some academic classes increases the performance of international students. Saudi Arabian students were worried about studying in English, reading, writing or speaking in the class when studying English (Heyn, 2013).

Language solutions focus on solving language and academic barriers to international students from Asia. Linguistic strategies help international students have the ability to practice English in everyday life, watch TV and talk to American people in the canteen or supermarkets. A Chinese student named Bruce. Encourage international students to share their interests, experiences, and interactions with their language skills and improve learning efficiency.

## Methods

### 3.1 Research Design

The study was qualitative. It consisted of structured, self-administered interviews. The sample size was 15-20 international students, and they were inquired about their undergraduate and graduate study experiences in the US. They answered the questions in the interview and shared their experiences, which showed how those international students faced and resolved all those challenges. The interview questions were open-ended and identical to the participants, and this will provide them the opportunity to talk about their experiences in detail. The students were provided with complete information about the process of this study, and their consent was required for their participation in it. Permission was also acquired by videotaping their interviews to include the clips in the final short film. After the interviews, the data was analyzed to decide what and how to add it to the short film.

The questionnaire was based on 15-25 open-ended questions. The interview questions were formed to ask the students about their general and fundamental demographic data, including name, age, prospective career field, university name, nationality, and the name of the program they are enrolled in. Questions were asked about the education system in the home country of the participant to find out the differences between the education system of the US and the home countries of students. Some questions also asked the students about suggestions for prospective international students and successful coping strategies that the participants have used to overcome the challenges. The students' answers were then analyzed and carefully selected to be included in the final movie. It was

expected to report a significant difference between the education systems of international students in the home countries and the education system of the US.

The valuable comments gathered by international students have shown how international students came to the US in search of the best quality education and how they can deal with issues and problems. This movie will add value to my major theatre-film study and give me many insights into the movie-making process. It has enhanced and improved my experience as a student in making a movie and learning which efforts are required to make one effectively. It will give me the advantage of learning about the real scenario and real efforts that are necessary to make a film and how a person was able to deal with the problems and issues in any film project. It has provided me with the experience of sharing with different students and effectively communicating with them appropriately. The study has used active communication styles to encourage the students to share their problems and experiences with me.

## 3.2 Research Process

The data collection process started with interviewing international students from India, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Argentina, Brazil, Nigeria, Mexico, and Morocco. The interview was about financial issues, academic issues, social issues, and cultural issues, all issues faced by international students before they came to the United States. Then, you are going to jump to the next part. Most of their answers look the same, but some of them have different clues. For example, regarding financial issues, most international students get financial help from their families except for those that have a full scholarship from the government, Libyan students, and Saudi Arabian students.

## Research Findings

Following the acquisition of demographic information on intermediaries, the study began with the question about the strengths of international students. There was an extended position that they were motivated, sure, focused, and successful. Most of these respondents have these characteristics. Most of the international students were graduates. The interviews revealed that financial issues are very apparent for international students who have help from their families to be able to apply for a Visa. Two students have a full scholarship from their governments. The timeline from the day when the students apply for the visa until they get proof it took from one to two months. All students prepare themselves before they come to the US. Taking English program and saving money. Academic difficulties are also one of the significant challenges for international students. Results show that academic goals are discussed, and they keep finishing their education until they become professors. The requirements that should be passed to get admission are the GRE/GAT, [IELTS speaking test](#) and TOEFL. Except for students from Nigeria and Mexico, they can get admission without having those requirements.

Following a commitment and decision, the most substantial strengths that were agreed upon were

that smart international student (for example, have excellent analytical capabilities and better understand their work and scholarship) and a higher understanding. In these areas, students from India and China are particularly strong. Since then, the most influential aspects of work ethics, integrity, competence and cultural diversity have been the most. Professor, “worldviews; they seem to have a better experience than other students, and they often speak a lot of languages.” Finally, some instructors fit flexibility, adaptability, and respect.

Two ways were asked for problems and challenges for international students. First of all, “what do you see as the biggest problems of international students?” Later in the interview: “Do you think that when you are fighting in your international student classes, on a scale of 1 to 5, from 1 to very little, and 5 in large, do you believe that your difficulties are Have a look at the following things she asked. Every teacher was asked:

- Information about English,
- learning and work strategies,
- cultural differences,
- Not familiar with the University Campus and the resources available,
- Insufficient prerequisites for your class,
- Differences in teaching methods or teaching practices.

Culture has not been a big challenge for international students. They do have an issue with bounding and adapting to an American routine. Most likely, all the students love American friendships and how they are helpful to them. Language has been one of the noticeable challenges in this section of the research. Socialization has been one of the other variables discussed in this research. According to the respondents, it was hard for international students to socialize with their classmates because of the cultural gap, which was the main reason. About speaking, writing, and reading, the students mentioned that they all had an accent, and that did not affect their reading and writing. All of them agreed that there was a culture shock time they went through the first time when they arrived in the United States of America.

Higher education is challenging for all experienced students, and the move is not natural, and it causes many problems. This study examined difficulties that are unique to international students in higher education in the United States and who provide hidden practices that can improve academic performance. The conclusions emphasized the importance of a robust support system for international students, as these students have special needs and many other problems from their American counterparts. Although many students were satisfied with the general experience of American Universities, it was noted that students wanted to learn more about housing, academic programs, job opportunities, culture and language before they started their studies at American Universities. Therefore, orientation can play an essential role in promoting international students for various institutions and programs that are planned.

The results of this study have stated the results of previous studies on activities that improve the

productivity and effectiveness of the difficulties of international students in higher education. While most of the students reported that there is no problem and exclusion of having access to Rowan, more activities and intercultural activities should be planned and implemented to strengthen the international program and increase the population of this community.

## Discussion and Conclusion

Several research studies have been conducted to explore the issues faced by international students while living in the United States using different survey reports and qualitative interviews. The findings from interviews have revealed that international students have to experience social issues, academic challenges, and cultural adjustments as well. Mainly, educational problems involve the communication barriers between international students and the professors, fellow students, and administrative staff of colleges and universities. As a result of these obstacles, they face social isolation when they have to take part in various group activities. Moreover, living in the United States can be a cultural shock for many international students, and they have to deal with brand-new ways of thinking and behaving (Ozturgut & Murphy, 2009).

The United States has been playing its role significantly as a world leader when it comes to educating students from all across the globe, the number of maximum universities, and the number of top universities here. After World War II, the foreign policy of the United States aimed to have better connections with other countries, and that's why it focused on and emphasized educational relations on international levels. To achieve this purpose, the United States has been welcoming thousands of international students each year since then, and every year, the number of international students rises because of the offers of different kinds of assistance, aid, and scholarships on multiple levels to accommodate a maximum number of international students. The United States is a dream place for students to continue and complete their studies because of the highly esteemed and established universities here. They perceive these educational institutions as wonderlands mostly, arrive here with the highest levels of energy and enthusiasm, and usually fail to see the shortcomings and limitations they may have to experience while spending a few years here (Hopkins, 2012).

## Future Implications for Study

Most of the students thought that one needs to be flexible enough to be in the US. The culture may differ from your own country. There was one student who thought there should be a program for intermediate English for international students to smoothen up the process. Ultimately, getting out of your comfort zone is the key to surviving the challenges in America for international students. To understand the needs of these students, to increase their experiences and to increase their chances of success, there is a need for more extensive qualitative research related to the difficulties of international students in higher education in the United States. The relationship between student integration in the US culture and student success shows that more social attention should be paid

more attention and that more research is needed to create more cultures and more cultures. Container operations also, within a year or two, a continuous study can be made to determine the level of retention and student stage.

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